



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov>

GAIL FARBER, Director

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE: EP-2  
A2963

February 12, 2009

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Sheriff Leroy D. Baca  
Sheriff's Department

Raymond G. Fortner, Jr.  
Office of County Counsel

Gail Farber  
Director of Public Works

### **BOARD MOTION OF NOVEMBER 25, 2008, AGENDA ITEM 39-E PILOT REWARD PROGRAM FOR INFORMATION ON ILLEGAL DUMPING**

On November 25, 2008, your Board instructed Public Works to conduct a feasibility study and implementation plan for instituting a pilot reward program within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (similar to the process which offers rewards for information on crimes such as homicides) to allow a person to provide information on illegal dumping that would help identify the perpetrator(s) (such as names, vehicle license plate numbers, and any other identifying information) to the Sheriff's Department, and if that information leads to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrator(s), the reporting individual would be eligible to collect \$1,000. Further, your Board instructed Public Works to include an outreach component in the pilot program and include information in all community presentations concerning illegal dumping to notify the public that they may be eligible for a reward if they report identifying information to law enforcement. The Board also requested the Sheriff, Public Works, and County Counsel to report back on the feasibility of this program and to include a review of the effectiveness of similar programs in other jurisdictions.

On December 24, 2008, Public Works provided an update to your Board, including a request for a 45-day extension due to the complexity of this issue, and the need to collaboratively evaluate its various components.

Each Supervisor  
February 12, 2009  
Page 2

A County Working Group, chaired by Public Works and including the District Attorney, Sheriff, Chief Executive Office, County Counsel, Fire, Public Health, and Regional Planning evaluated the feasibility of instituting an illegal dumping reward program and developed recommendations for consideration by your Board, which are described below. As a part of the Working Group's analysis, an evaluation of the City of Los Angeles' reward program was conducted. Attachment 1 includes a description of the City of Los Angeles' program and a list of similar reward programs from around the State.

### **County Working Group**

In Fiscal Year 2007-08, the County expended approximately \$4 million on cleaning up illegally dumped debris within road rights-of-way, and quantities of illegally dumped materials have been steadily increasing over the last several years. Therefore, there was consensus among the Working Group that a reward program would enhance the County's illegal dumping prevention efforts. The Working Group discussed the City of Los Angeles' reward program which is focused on South Los Angeles and the implications of establishing a similar program for the unincorporated County areas to reduce illegal dumping. The Working Group determined that the County's reward program should be established on a pilot basis in the unincorporated area of Florence-Firestone, located adjacent to South Los Angeles. This area is prone to significant illegal dumping and a notable increase in illegal dumping debris and complaints has occurred in this area since mid-2008 which may be the result of illegal dumpers shifting to areas outside the City limits. An Ordinance amending the County Code would need to be adopted by the Board to authorize such a program. Additionally, the Sheriff has recommended a law enforcement component consisting of two full-time deputies, who will be dedicated to enforcing the illegal dumping ordinance and conducting follow-up investigations. The estimated annual cost of funding the two full-time deputies and their required equipment is approximately \$400,000.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the above described analysis by the Working Group, the following is recommended:

1. Establish a two-year pilot reward program, providing \$1,000 for information leading to the successful prosecution of a perpetrator of illegal dumping, beginning July 1, 2009, and concluding June 30, 2011.

2. Focus the pilot reward program initially in the unincorporated Florence-Firestone area and expand it to other areas based on lessons learned and the availability of funding for related investigation and enforcement activities.

Upon approval of the program, the Working Group will continue to meet on a regular basis to focus on the following activities:

1. Assist County Counsel in drafting an Ordinance for Board approval to amend the County Code to authorize the pilot reward program.
2. Explore funding options for investigation and enforcement of the pilot reward program which include but are not limited to:
  - a. The California Integrated Waste Management Board illegal dumping grant program.
  - b. Board discretionary funds as utilized for the homicide reward program.
3. Explore the potential of using Sheriff's volunteers for the purpose of supplementing and providing additional investigative and enforcement resources for the two full-time deputies.
4. Assist Public Works in establishing an effective illegal dumping outreach and education program to include new brochures, press releases, and public service announcements to publicize the pilot reward program.
5. Coordinate activities with existing County programs and other public agencies, to maximize program efficiency and avoid duplication of efforts, such as the Florence-Firestone Community Enhancement Team, the Nuisance Abatement Team, and the City of Los Angeles' city-agency coordination committee on illegal dumping.
6. Submit quarterly reports to your Board on the progress of the pilot reward program, including an evaluation of the success of the program and recommendations to expand the program to other unincorporated areas of the County.
7. Refine the program and incorporate lessons learned from other jurisdictions.

Each Supervisor  
February 12, 2009  
Page 4

Based on your Board's direction, the Working Group will proceed in implementing the recommendations listed above. As a first priority, the Working Group will identify the level of funding needed to successfully implement the program, investigate all potential funding sources, and pursue funding as appropriate. If you have any questions, please contact Carlos Ruiz of the Department of Public Works, Environmental Programs Division at (626) 458-3500.

CS:cw

P:\Sec\Engineering\Illegal Dumping Reward Motion

Attach.

cc: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
District Attorney  
Chief Executive Office  
Fire Department  
Internal Services Department  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
Department of Public Health  
Department of Regional Planning

**Reward Programs in Other Jurisdictions in California**

**City of Los Angeles**

The City of Los Angeles estimates that it spends approximately \$12 million each year on illegal dumping cleanup activities. Approximately half of this amount is spent in South Los Angeles. To reduce illegal dumping, the City has developed a comprehensive illegal dumping prevention program that includes an illegal dumping reward program. The reward program launched in July 2008 to deter potential illegal dumpers, offers residents \$1,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of individuals who illegally dump on public property, including alleys, streets, and sidewalks. Under the reward program, which is administered by the City's Police Department and funded by their graffiti fund, City residents are encouraged to call 311 and provide the necessary information that leads to the apprehension and conviction of the perpetrator. Because the 311 number is also used by residents to report all illegal dumping complaints, tipsters must request and fill out a reward application in order to be eligible for the \$1,000 reward, and be available to testify in court as an eyewitness.

The City currently promotes the program via community meetings, distribution of flyers, press releases, radio shows, and online, and is investigating other promotional mechanisms. Since launching the program, four individuals have received the \$1,000 reward. When perpetrators are arrested, they are typically sentenced to probation, required to pay a fine, and/or required to clean up litter or illegal dumping sites.

It is important to note the following aspects of the City's illegal dumping prevention program, which affects the success of the reward program:

- The City's Bureau of Street Services Investigation and Enforcement Division utilize 45 investigators and 25 volunteer reserves to investigate a wide variety of code enforcement crimes, including illegal dumping. These activities are funded by the City's General Fund Account. Approximately 10 percent of each enforcement officer's time is devoted to curb illegal dumping. The enforcement officers have limited peace officer authority (to arrest and cite), however, they do not carry firearms.

The enforcement officers conduct site investigations of gross illegal dumping incidents, conduct stake outs (approximately 60 in South Los Angeles alone during the first half of Fiscal Year 2008-09), issue administrative citations (approximately 1,200 in South Los Angeles alone during the first half of Fiscal Year 2008-09), and have arrested over 1,100 individuals for illegal dumping since 2002, with an 80 percent

## ATTACHMENT 1

conviction rate (including fines, probation, or other judgments). The majority of arrestees have been commercial haulers attempting to avoid paying disposal fees.

- The City has established a City-agency coordination committee which meets monthly to exclusively focus on illegal dumping in South Los Angeles. All City departments involved in enforcement, cleanup, and prevention efforts meet to share information, coordinate efforts, and develop strategies for reducing illegal dumping.
- In summer 2008 the California Integrated Waste Management Board awarded the City a three-year, \$500,000 grant aimed at reducing illegal dumping in South Los Angeles. Of this amount, \$100,000 is to be used towards compensating the overtime costs of investigators to conduct enforcement and surveillance activities, while the remaining \$400,000 would be used for clean-up activities.

### Other Jurisdictions

According to our research, including consulting with the Statewide Illegal Dumping Task Force, the following jurisdictions in California have instituted a reward program similar to the City of Los Angeles.

JURISDICTION	AMOUNT OF REWARD	YEAR ESTABLISHED	FUNDING SOURCE	NO. OF REWARDS ISSUED
TOWN OF APPLE VALLEY	\$500	2007	Burrtec, a local waste hauler	3
CITY OF LONG BEACH	Up to 50 percent of the collected fines	2007	Imposition of fines	0
CITY OF SACRAMENTO	\$500	2000	Imposition of fines	0
CITY OF SANTA FE SPRINGS	\$1,000	2008	General fund	0
IMPERIAL COUNTY	Up to \$1,000	2008	Supported by sale of bumper stickers, decals, and signs	0
SACRAMENTO COUNTY	Up to \$250	2006	Grant funding from the California Integrated Waste Management Board	28
SAN BERNARDINO	Up to \$1,000	2007	General fund	1

**ATTACHMENT 1**

JURISDICTION	AMOUNT OF REWARD	YEAR ESTABLISHED	FUNDING SOURCE	NO. OF REWARDS ISSUED
COUNTY				
SHASTA COUNTY (AND ALL CITIES WITHIN)	Up to \$500	2007	General fund	5
STANISLAUS COUNTY	Between \$125 and \$1,000	2005	General fund	0

It should be noted that pursuant to Section 373.3 of the California Penal Code, a tiered structure of fines can be imposed for illegally dumping waste, from a minimum of \$250 for a first offense and up to as much as \$10,000 for a third offense, depending on the quantity of material illegally dumped. Pursuant to Section 374a of the California Penal Code, a tipster is entitled to half of the collected fines.